

DETAILED ACTION

1. Claims 1-3 and 6-9 are pending in this application.

Examiner's Amendment

2. An examiner's amendment to the record appears below. Should the changes and/or additions be unacceptable to applicant, an amendment may be filed as provided by 37 CFR 1.312. To ensure consideration of such an amendment, it MUST be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee.

The proposal for this examiner's amendment was given in a telephone interview with Christopher M Tobin (Reg. 40290) on April 12, 2009.

The claims have been amended as follows:

1. (Currently Amended) A file management device for managing, files recorded in a recording medium with an index file recorded in the recording medium,

wherein the index file includes a series of entries comprising, is made up of entries for extracted text which is in block, information extracted from files recorded in the recording medium, information about a file correlated to a folder set in the recording

Art Unit: 2164

medium, and entries for thumbnail images extracted from the files recorded in the recording medium, entries for property information about the folder, and layer information which indicates layer structures of the file and the folder by pointing to other entries including hierarchy management information which expresses a hierarchical structure of the files and a folder recorded on the recording medium, registration information which indicates files belonging to the folder by pointing to entries, and virtual folder information that indicates whether or not the folder is a virtual folder;

wherein the entry for the information about the folder includes registration information which indicates files belonging to the folder by pointing to other entries, and identifying information that indicates whether or not the folder is a virtual folder;

wherein the file management device retrieves the entries of the index file according to conditions for retrieval set by a user to select a file registered in the index file, and registers, as an entry for the virtual folder, a retrieval result as to the selected retrieved file in the index file, along with the conditions for retrieval, in the index file; and

wherein, when the entry for the retrieval result is registered, information indicating that the entry is for the retrieval result is set in the index file,

wherein the layer hierarchy management information is set so as to indicate that the virtual folder for the retrieval result is under a virtual retrieval result collection folder

Art Unit: 2164

in which retrieval results are collected, and the registration information is set to point to ~~entries~~ an entry of the selected retrieved file.

2. (Currently amended) A file managing method of managing ~~a~~-file files recorded in a recording medium with an index file recorded in the recording medium,

wherein the index file ~~includes a series of entries comprising, is made up of~~ entries for extracted text which is ~~in block, information extracted from~~ ~~a~~-file files recorded in the recording medium, ~~entries for property information about a~~ ~~file correlated to a folder set in the recording medium, and including hierarchy management~~ ~~information which expresses a hierarchical structure of the files and a folder recorded~~ ~~on the recording medium, registration information which indicates files belonging to the~~ ~~folder by pointing to entries, and virtual folder information that indicates whether or not~~ ~~the folder is a virtual folder; and~~

wherein the entry for the information about the folder includes registration information that indicates files belonging to the folder by pointing to other entries, and identifying information which indicates whether or not the folder is a virtual folder;

said method comprising:

a step of retrieving the entries of the index file according to retrieval conditions set by a user to select a file registered in the index file;

a step of registering, as an entry for the virtual folder, a retrieval result about the selected retrieved file in the index file, along with the conditions for retrieval;

a step of setting information indicating that the entry is for the retrieval result in the index file, and

a step of setting the layer information hierarchy management so as to indicate that the virtual folder for the retrieval result is under a virtual retrieval result collection folder in which retrieval results are collected; and

a step of setting the registration information to point to entries an entry of the selected retrieved file.

3. (Previously presented) The file managing method according to claim 2, wherein retrieval of the entries of the index file in the retrieving step is performed by refining the conditions for retrieval registered in the entry for the retrieval result.

4. (Cancel)

5. (Cancel)

6. (Previously presented) The file management device according to claim 1, wherein retrieval of the entries of the index file in the retrieving step is performed by refining the conditions for retrieval registered in the entry for the result of retrieval.

7. (Previously presented) The file management device according to claim 1, wherein in a retrieval processing, when the file management device determines that the conditions for retrieval are identical to any of those already registered in the virtual folder, the file management device displays the retrieval result performed in past under the identical conditions for retrieval.

8. (Previously presented) The file management device according to claim 1, wherein updating date is registered in the entry for the virtual folder.

9. (Previously presented) The file management device according to claim 8 wherein the file management device determines that the number of entries for retrieval results is larger than a predetermined number, the file management device deletes an entry with the oldest update date.

Allowable Subject matter

3. Claims 1-3 and 6-9 are allowed.

The examiner deems claims 1-3 and 6-9 as novel when viewed as a whole for the limitations of the file management device.

The closest prior art of record, Hattori discloses, A file managing method of managing ~~a~~file files recorded in a recording medium with an index file recorded in the recording medium ([0186]), wherein the index file ~~includes a series of entries comprising,~~ is made up of entries for extracted text which is in block, information extracted from ~~a~~file files recorded in the recording medium, entries for property information ([0004]; fig. 24; [0039]; fig. 29; [0044]).

However, the prior art of record fails to anticipate or render obvious the recited feature of the limitations cited above added with including hierarchy management information which expresses a hierarchical structure of the files and a folder recorded on the recording medium, registration information which indicates files belonging to the folder by pointing to entries, and virtual folder information that indicates whether or not the folder is a virtual folder; wherein the file management device retrieves the entries of the index file according to conditions for retrieval set by a user to select a file registered in the index file, and registers, as an entry for the virtual folder, a retrieval result as to

Art Unit: 2164

~~the selected-retrieved file in the index file, along with the conditions for retrieval, in the index file; and wherein, when the entry for the retrieval result is registered, information indicating that the entry is for the retrieval result is set in the index file, wherein the layer hierarchy management information is set so as to indicate that the virtual folder for the retrieval result is under a virtual retrieval result collection folder in which retrieval results are collected, and the registration information is set to point to entries-an entry of the selected-retrieved file.~~

These features, together with the other limitations of the independent claims are novel and non-obvious over the prior art of record. The dependent claims 3, 6-9 being definite, enabled by the specification, and further limiting to the independent claims, are also allowable.

Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance".

Conclusion

4. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to FAZLUL QUADER whose telephone number is (571)270-1905. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F 8-5 Alternate Fridays off.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Charles Rones can be reached on 571-272-4085. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

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Art Unit 2164

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Application/Control Number: 10/572,808
Art Unit: 2164

Page 10

/Charles Rones/

Supervisory Patent Examiner, Art Unit 2164